

August 14, 2006

City Council of Lynchburg, VA
900 Church Street
Lynchburg, VA 24504

Dear City Council of Lynchburg, VA,

**SUBJECT: HONORING MR. DESMOND T. DOSS-WWII MEDAL OF HONOR
RECIPIENT**

Early this year I was contacted by Harlow Reynolds, a local history buff and Patriot. I learned of a true American hero that was born and raised right here in Lynchburg, Virginia. Desmond T Doss was a Seventh-Day Adventists that was called upon to serve his country in 1942. He chose not to bear arms because of his strong religious beliefs. Therefore, he was registered in wartime as a conscientious objector. He would later say he preferred to be called a "conscientious cooperator".

The Medal of Honor was awarded to Mr. Doss for his actions on the island of Okinawa on May 1, 1945. Because of attrition he was the only medic available on this Saturday, his holy day. After asking God's forgiveness for breaking his vow he proceeded single handedly to rescue as many as 75 wounded members of the 30thth Infantry.

Desmond T. Doss died on March 23, 2006. All of the veteran's organizations in Lynchburg feel as I do that this "homegrown hero" deserves to be recognized and remembered. Our suggestion is to name the Northwest Extension Bypass (Rt.501 from Old Forest Rd. to Boonsboro Rd.) after Mr. Desmond T Doss.

We ask that City Council members approve this proposal to honor Desmond T. Doss. Our hope is that those driving this "serene and peaceful" stretch of highway will remember that sacrifices are made daily and that "freedom is not free." "All gave some, some gave all, remember the fallen."

Thanks for your consideration,

Steve Bozeman
1129 Meriwether Circle
Lynchburg, Va. 24503 (434 384-7609)



Harlow Reynolds
1980 Easley Ave.
Lynchburg, Va. 24501 (434 845-1388)



Attachments:

Desmond T. Doss citation and photo
Seventh-Day Adventist Church letter
Misc. news articles/photos

Doss Honored As Thousands Watch Parade

Honor Medal Winner Re- turns Home To Receive City's Welcome

(Continued from Page One)

the gift. "I also thank God," he said, "for sparing my life and being able to use me for my country."

Next on the program was Major Stroup's address, which with Mayor Lichford's introduction and Cpl. Doss' reply, were broadcast over WLVA.

"We of Lynchburg are proud of the honor bestowed on Cpl. Doss," Major Stroup said, in opening his address, and he added, "every fighting man is deserving of our honor."

"Tonight," Chaplain Stroup continued, "we are particularly proud of this man (Cpl. Doss), and of Lynchburg's tradition of sending men to serve for their country."

Honors All Who Served

Citing Col. Stokes' record in Europe, Major Stroup said the City honors all its men who served, and while they could not be named, it remembers them all.

"Cpl. Doss received three honors," he declared. "The first for courage, the Congressional Medal of Honor, the nation's highest award, which he richly deserved." However, he added that "Cpl. Doss knows that no man in the Infantry is lacking in courage, he knows that all infantrymen are afraid, and that courage is not the absence of fear, but the overcoming of fear."

"Cpl. Doss was honored by his comrades," Major Stroup said, mentioning the second of the three honors. "In that he received the men's love and affection, which will go with him always in the remembrance of the men whose lives he helped save, and his reward is gratitude in their eyes."

"The third of his honors," Maj. Stroup declared, "is from the Lord. He has received a reward that his Nation and comrades cannot give, a reward for well done, good and faithful service."

Chaplain Stroup asked for "belief in the other fellows and his rights," and concluded by congratulating Cpl. Doss, saying, "we of Lynchburg are proud of you."

Col. West then read the citation accompanying Cpl. Doss's award and Col. Stokes concluded the celebration when he spoke briefly on the work done by medical corpsmen during the war as he witnessed them in action. The medical corpsmen meant a great deal to the soldier, whose morale and spirit was greatly helped by their presences in the front.

Doss Here to Receive Lynchburg's Acclaim

By DOROTHY S. BROOKS

Wearing the Congressional Medal of Honor, the nation's highest award, and the Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster, Cpl. Desmond T. Doss, Lynchburg's 26-year-old medical corpsman who is the only conscientious objector in the nation's history to receive this country's top award, stepped from a Greyhound bus at noon today to be greeted by his mother and father, Mayor Lewis E. Lichford, a welcoming committee, the E. C. Glass High School Band and a large group of friends.

Arriving with the Corporal was his wife who is a Richmond school teacher, and his sister-in-law, Miss Gloria Schutte of Richmond.

"It is wonderful to be back home," Cpl. Doss said in a brief statement to band members and other listeners. "I have been all over... both in this country and over yonder and all I can say is there's no place like home."

In an interview, the Corporal said there he was not especially scared when President Truman pinned on him the Congressional Medal of Honor but that he "felt sad."

"I couldn't help but think of all those other boys who aren't coming back," he declared. "It brought back many memories that I didn't want to think about then, or ever."

Although he has more than 100 points to his credit, Cpl. Doss says he does not expect to receive his discharge in the near future. He is now on a 30-day leave, following which he will report to Washington.

A native of Lynchburg, the soft-spoken son of Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Doss, 1835 Easley street, went through three Pacific campaigns and is often referred to as the "Wonderman of Okinawa" for his display of heroism and unselfishness while under fire. He is credited with saving the lives of 75 men.

"Although the fighting is over," he said, "everyone should continue to buy Victory Bonds in the campaign which opens here Monday. Those bonds will help speed fellows home. All the boys are heroes. Some of us were lucky enough to win medals, but all of us want to get home just as fast as possible."

Following his reception at the station, Cpl. Doss and his party were rushed to the home of his parents where he will spend a few hours visiting with his mother and father before this afternoon's parade and tonight's banquet at which Maj. Russell C. Stroup will be the speaker.

The program will begin with an invocation by the Rev. R. F. Woods, pastor of the Seventh Day Adventist Church of which Cpl. Doss is a member. The National Anthem will follow, after which Lt. Col. Harry P. Holt, master of ceremonies, will take charge, introducing A. B. Carter, Lynchburg's oldest war veteran.

POSITION OF DOSS ALWAYS SATISFACTORY TO DRAFT OFFICIALS

That Desmond T. Doss has always acted in accord with the provisions of selective service as regards conscientious objectors was the assertion today from the chairman of his draft board, Clarence G. Burton.

Mr. Burton said "his position has been very satisfactory from the first. While his religion did not permit him to bear arms, he was ready to accept his full responsibility."

Col. and Mrs. Stokes; Abe Cohen, general chairman for the celebration and commander of Post 13, American Legion; Mrs. Cohen; Mr. and Mrs. Dodson Doss, Cpl. Doss' parents; Mrs. Aubrey Millner, sister of Cpl. Doss, and Maj. Stroup.

Also to be introduced is Mayor Lichford who will in turn introduce the Corporal and his wife, and present them with a gift from the citizens of Lynchburg. This part of the program will be broadcast on WLVA at 7:45, it was announced.

NEWSWEEK, SEPTEMBER 2, 1946

CONCHIES: Then and Now

As mortar shells burst around them, the soldiers of the 77th Infantry Division scrambled down the steep cliff and dove thankfully into shallow Okinawa foxholes. But above them, alone against the shell-torn skyline, a mummy figure gestured wildly. When his mates returned to his aid, he lowered to them, one by one, the 75 wounded who had fallen in the futile assault on the 400-foot cliff. He was Pfc. Desmond T. Doss of Lynchburg, Va., an Army medic designated on his Army service record 1-AO—conscientious objector.

Doss was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, the first ever to go to a conscientious objector. He and his outstanding fellows—Charles S. Satterthwaite

worked as attendants in mental hospitals, where they helped to relieve an acute labor shortage. Two hundred took the rigorous training of the "smoke-jumpers" who parachuted into inaccessible mountain areas to fight forest fires, such as those which were threatened by Japanese balloons.

Healing Seven Days a Week

DESMOND T. DOSS

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS, U.S. ARMY Medical Detachment, 307th Infantry, 77th Infantry Division



BIOGRAPHY

BORN
February 1, 1919
Lynchburg, Virginia
ENTERED SERVICE
Lynchburg, Virginia
BRANCH
U.S. Army
DUTY
World War II
CURRENT RESIDENCE
Georgia

DESMOND DOSS QUIT SCHOOL AFTER THE EIGHTH grade in the middle of the Depression to help support his family. He was working in the shipyards in Newport News, Virginia, when he was drafted into the Army in April 1942. He wanted to serve his country, but as a devout Seventh Day Adventist, he chose not to bear arms, so he joined the Army's Medical Corps. In basic training, the other recruits considered him strange because of his deep religious convictions—so much so that they threatened and harassed him and tried to get him transferred out of their unit. Doss successfully fought efforts to discharge him.

Private Doss served as a medic with the 77th Division in campaigns on Guam and Leyte in 1944, where the lingering suspicions the other men had about him were dispelled by his bravery under fire. On Okinawa, in the late spring of 1945, his battalion was assaulting a jagged escarpment rising up four hundred feet whose summit was commanded by well-entrenched Japanese forces. It was a battle that began on April 29 when the Americans took the position and continued on for nearly three weeks as the Japanese fought back from caves and tunnels. At one point, he treated four men who had been cut down while assaulting a strongly defended cave. Only a few yards away from Japanese guns, he dressed each of their wounds and made four trips to drag them to safety.

On May 5, a Saturday and Doss's Sabbath, he was the only medic available as the ongoing assault on the escarpment met heavy resistance. Telling himself that Christ had healed seven days a week, he advanced with the rest of the men. They seemed on the verge of finally taking the position when the enemy concentrated massive artillery, mortar, and machine-gun fire on them, driving most of them back down the face of the

escarpment and leaving dozens of casualties behind.

Doss alone stayed with the fallen soldiers. Under constant fire, he tended the wounded, then dragged them to the edge of the escarpment and lowered them down in a rope sling. Each time he got one of them to safety, he prayed, "Dear God, let me get just one more man." By nightfall, he had rescued seventy-five GIs.

Several days later, after American forces were advancing slowly against strong resistance, Doss was seriously wounded in the leg by a grenade. He treated himself, then waited five hours to be rescued. As he was being carried back to an aid station on a stretcher, the enemy counterattacked. Along the way, Doss insisted on giving his stretcher to a badly injured GI.

Another soldier who was slightly wounded came along and suggested to Doss that the two of them try to reach the aid station together. As they were making their way, a sniper's bullet struck Doss in the arm, entering at his wrist and traveling to his upper arm. He improvised a splint out of a rifle stock, and he and the other wounded man eventually made it to the aid station.

In the meantime, the litter bearers had returned to Doss. When they couldn't find him, they assumed he was dead. The news made the front page of his hometown newspaper in Lynchburg, Virginia. Doss, now at a field hospital, had a nurse help him write a letter to his mother to let her know that reports of his death had been greatly exaggerated.

The bullet in Doss's arm was removed at the Woodrow Wilson Hospital in Waynesboro, Virginia. After the operation, he was told he was being taken to Washington, D.C., in the company commander's car to receive the Medal of Honor. President Harry Truman placed it around his neck on October 12, 1945.



SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST
CHURCH

Lynchburg
Congregation

From the Desk of
Pastor Dale A. Long

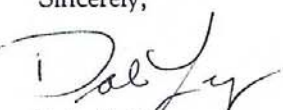
April 13, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

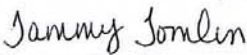
Desmond Doss was a true American hero and faithful follower of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Those who personally knew Desmond during his many years as a member of this congregation continue to remember him with great fondness and spiritual respect. Because of his faithfulness to both God and country, our congregation chose to rename our church school in honor of him some years ago.

It has recently come to my attention that the city of Lynchburg may give consideration to naming a highway in honor of Desmond. On behalf of the Lynchburg Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Desmond T. Doss Adventist Junior Academy I would like to offer our unequivocal support for any such effort to further honor this hero.

Sincerely,



Dale A. Long
Pastor



Tammy Tomlin
Principal, Desmond T. Doss Adventist Junior Academy